

**STATE AUTOMATIC FIRE SPRINKLER FITTER APPRENTICESHIP ADVISORY
COMMITTEE**

March 21, 2013
UA Local 183 Training Center, Pewaukee, WI

DRAFT MINUTES

Members Present	Organization
Beil, Michael	Sprinkler Fitters Local 183
Carlson, Sherry	Design Build Fire Protection
Driebel, Dan	Sprinkler Fitters Local 669
Gall, Corey (Co-Chair)	Sprinkler Fitters Local 183
Hext, Rick	Ahern Fire Protection
Hintz, Greg	K Kranski & Sons, Inc.
Kraft, Ron	Sprinkler Fitters Local 183
Radke, Eric	Gruneau Fire Protection
Sferra, Steve (Co-Chair)	United Fire Protection
Members Absent	Organization
Cannon, Robert	Sprinkler Fitters Local 669
Consultants & Guests	Organization
Belanger, Wayne	Madison
Morgan, Karen	Madison
Robakowski, Barb	Madison
Smith, Owen	Madison
Triscari, Nick	Milwaukee

-
1. The meeting was called to order at 10:08 a.m. by Steve Sferra, Committee Co-chair, in conformity with Wisconsin Open Meeting Law.
 2. A sign-in sheet was circulated to record those in attendance.
 3. Minutes of October 8, 2012, State Automatic Fire Sprinklerfitter Apprenticeship Advisory Committee were approved as written.

4. Old Business

a. Is the VIP Program Relevant to Sprinkler Fitters?

- Members had agreed to review the VIP curriculum at this meeting to determine whether or not to participate in the program as a trade. The committee's enduring concern has been that the program is too focused on welding to be applicable to sprinkler fitting.
- Owen Smith distributed handouts of the current curriculum. The UA has modified the curriculum several times since the program began; lessening the intense focus on welding in favor of a final welding that incorporates skills more applicable to other trades, such as plumbing.
- Karen Morgan explained some basics about the program. Participants are responsible for paying their own expenses. The program is used currently by the steamfitter occupation only. BAS granted graduates enough credits to be considered a second-year apprentice. However, although VIP graduates had the equivalent experience of a second year apprentice, they had far less exposure and familiarity with job site culture, which BAS remedied by encouraging employers to provide additional orientation and mentors to the apprentices. Overall, employers have been very pleased with the graduates.
- The Governor's budget includes funds for a new, full-time position for BAS dedicated to VIP recruitment and administration.
- Karen Morgan suggested that a few members visit the program site, and recommend a final decision to the committee. Steve Sferra and Corey Gall volunteered.

b. Incorporating Health & Wellness Activities in Apprenticeship

- Owen Smith reported that, as BAS agreed at the previous meeting, he had researched examples of apprenticeship training that includes health and fitness, such as work processes or job books. No apprenticeship programs in Wisconsin officially include health and fitness, because such provisions are typically covered in employer policies and programs, such as safety and wellness, rather than industry-wide training programs.
- Rick Hext expressed his concern that the committee should still be able to include health and fitness in the work processes, despite its having yet been done by another trade. Owen Smith and Karen Morgan agreed, and reminded members that they were presenting the results of their research on examples of health and fitness in apprenticeship documents, not discouraging program upgrades.
 - As a result of this discussion, BAS will research employer health and fitness programs that the committee could review for possible inclusion in work processes. Examples include Mortensen Construction, J.F. Ahern, and Findorff.

5. New Business

a. Introduction of New Member(s)

The committee welcomed new Members Dan Driebel and Ron Kraft

b. Election of New Employee Co-Chair

Rick Hext was nominated by Corey Gall. The motion was seconded by Greg Hintz, and approved by the committee.

c. Recommendations for new Employee member

This matter was resolved between the release of the tentative agenda and the meeting.

d. Other

- Karen Morgan asked the committee whether they wanted to revisit their decision that a qualified employer must either employ a journey worker or have been a journey worker. Being a master in and of itself is insufficient because the master and journey worker exams do not cover the same material. She stated the issue has resurfaced because a master employer who has been in business for nearly 15 years but neither employs a journey worker nor holds a journey worker card wants to sponsor an apprentice. Karen asked whether the committee wants to consider an alternative policy, such as allowing contractors that have been in business at least five years to train apprentices.
- Members declined, and upheld their previous decision.

6. WTCS Update

Nick Triscari reported that Milwaukee Area Technical College is struggling to maintain Sprinkler fitter classes.

7. Review Program Participants

- Thirty-eight apprentices and 12 employers are enrolled currently in the program. The apprentice total declined slightly from 41 in fall 2012, and is the lowest total in a continual decline since 2008.
- No participant statistics were reported from Local 669.
- Owen Smith asked committee members to consider additional data and graphical presentations that would help members comprehend the state of the programs and make more informed decisions. BAS will acquire new reporting software this summer that is capable of presenting more data in more ways. For example, BAS will bring to the fall meeting a line graph of annual employer totals from 2000 – 2013.
 - Rick Hext asked whether BAS provide data that looks forward, such as trends or projections.
 - As result of this discussion, BAS will bring to the fall meeting a presentation on employment projections and trends in the construction sector by the DWD Office of Economic Advisors. BAS will also email PowerPoint on projections to committees.

7. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 31, 2013, at 10:00 a.m. at the UA Local 183 Training Center in Pewaukee, WI.

8. The meeting was adjourned at noon.

Submitted by Owen Smith, Program Analyst.